
THE *INDEX TO PLANT CHROMOSOME NUMBERS* (IPCN): THREE DECADES OF PUBLICATION BY THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN COME TO AN END

Peter Goldblatt¹ and Porter P. Lowry II^{1,2}

The *Index to Plant Chromosome Numbers* (IPCN) was conceived in the 1950s by botanists at the University of California, Berkeley, as an index to all original plant chromosome counts published in the world's literature. At the time, the value of chromosome information was increasing for the insights that cytology provided about relationships and evolutionary pathways, and new counts were accumulating rapidly. The *Index* was seen as a complement to the earlier *Chromosome Atlas of Flowering Plants* by Darlington and Wylie (1955) and the equally valued *Chromosome Atlas of Cultivated Plants* by Darlington and Janaki Amal (1945).

Preparation of annual indexes, supported initially by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), was coordinated by Marion S. Cave (UC, Berkeley), who served as editor from 1956 through 1964 (Cave, 1958–1959, 1961–1965). The project depended largely on a team of voluntary reviewers, each assigned a set of journals to review for chromosome counts. The IPCN project moved to the Biosystematics Research Institute, Canada Department of Agriculture, in about 1966, where under R. J. Moore's editorship, indexes were published covering 1967 to 1974 (Moore, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1977). Moore's last contribution was a combined 1973–1974 index (Moore, 1977), after which ill health forced him to relinquish editorship and IPCN actually ceased to function for some years.

In 1978, the IPCN project formally moved to the Missouri Botanical Garden, under the editorship of Peter Goldblatt, who had offered to take on the project, and who secured a series of grants from the NSF beginning in 1978 to finance the preparation and publication of chromosome indexes. In 1987, Dale E. Johnson, a long-time reviewer for the project, joined as co-editor. Data entry via TROPICOS with

software developed by Bob Magill began with the 1982 index, and all counts published thereafter are databased and available online.

After 2005, proposals to the NSF for continued support of the project were declined and it became clear that the NSF would no longer fund such endeavors. Preparation of the most recently published index (2004–2006) (Goldblatt & Johnson, 2010) was funded entirely by the Missouri Botanical Garden (salary for data entry personnel, Goldblatt's time coordinating IPCN, Magill's time for software development). From the outset, publication costs were always funded by the Garden, with some or all of the costs being recovered through sales.

Financial constraints in 2009 and 2010 resulted in plans to release the 2004–2006 *Index*, then in proof stage, electronically rather than as a print publication. In response to this plan, Tod Stuessy (International Association for Plant Taxonomy [IAPT] Secretary and Professor of Botany at University of Vienna) indicated that he considered the IPCN to be an invaluable service to the botanical community (see also Fay, 2011) and that he regarded print publication of indexes as essential. He thus offered to assume responsibility for publication of IPCN in the IAPT serial *Regnum Vegetabile*, starting with the 2004–2006 *Index* (the latest IPCN volume, published in December 2010).

Professor Stuessy has undertaken to find a new home for IPCN, although to date no one has indicated a willingness to assume editorship of the project. At his bidding, in August 2010 Goldblatt forwarded all reviewing information to Karol Marhold at IAPT, who is assuming the editorship on an interim basis, and he informed all IPCN reviewers about the planned new editorship.

In an effort to maintain smooth production of IPCN, Professor Stuessy offered a modest annual

¹ Missouri Botanical Garden, P.O. Box 299, St. Louis, Missouri 63166-0299, U.S.A. peter.goldblatt@mobot.org.

² Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Département Systématique et Évolution, UMR 7205, CP 39, 57 rue Cuvier, 75213 Paris CEDEX 05, France.

doi: 10.3417/2011027

subsidy to the Missouri Botanical Garden to cover the cost of further data entry, with the understanding that downloads would be sent to IAPT for publication of future indexes. Professor Stuessy understands the importance of continuing to build the IPCN database and of maintaining its integration within TROPICOS, and he supports the Garden's willingness to do so.

Over a span of more than three decades, the Missouri Botanical Garden regularly published the *Index to Plant Chromosome Numbers*, beginning with the index for 1975–1978 and ending with the index for the years 2004–2006 (Goldblatt, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1987; Goldblatt & Johnson, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2010). Responsibility for the project has now been successfully transferred to IAPT, closing an important chapter in the history of the Missouri Botanical Garden's contribution to botanical knowledge and service to the research community.

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